

Community College of Allegheny County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan

Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) is committed to the success and well-being of all students, inclusive of their emotional and mental health. The following protocol has been established for guiding anyone who may encounter a student in crisis.

What to do if a student indicates they may harm themselves or others:

- On Campus – during regular business hours (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday) contact the Campus [Counseling Department](#), [Dean of Students](#) and/or [Campus Security](#) (June and July hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday).
- Off campus - contact the Campus [Counseling Department](#), [Dean of Students](#) and/or [Campus Security](#).
- After regular business hours call 911 or [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#), 1-800-273-8255.

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Resources

To assist our college community, the following list of suicide prevention resources has been compiled in an effort to ensure anyone struggling with suicidal thoughts can find and access the help they need expeditiously. It is important that students, faculty, and staff know the risk factors and warning signs of an individual considering suicide. As such, they can reach out and provide assistance when it is most needed.

CCAC Counseling Department

Allegheny Campus	412.237.2565, Student Services Center Room 110	North Campus	412.369.3614, Room 1004
Boyce Campus	724.325.6657, South Wing Fifth Floor	South Campus	412.469.6216, Room G309

Recognize the Signs

Most people considering suicide show one or more sign. Here's what you should observe and know:

Know the risk factors	Watch for Signs	Increase protective factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous suicide attempt • Engaging in self-injury • History of psychiatric diagnosis • Alcohol and other substance use disorders • History of trauma or abuse • Recent discharge from psychiatric inpatient treatment • Major physical or chronic illnesses • Family history of suicide • Recent job or financial loss • Recent loss of relationship • Easy access to lethal means of self-harm • Local clusters of suicide • Lack of social support, healthcare, or mental health services • Exposure to others who have died by suicide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about wanting to die or suicide • Expressing hopelessness about the future • Feeling like a burden to others • Displaying overwhelming or severe emotional distress • Loss of interest in activities or others • Neglect of personal appearance or hygiene • Increased alcohol or drug use • Sudden mood changes • Unbearable or chronic physical pain • Changes in sleep • Reckless behavior • Increased agitation or irritability or revenge seeking behavior • Personality change including expressing anger or hostility • Withdrawal • Giving away belongings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance use disorders • Support through ongoing medical and mental health care relationships • Restricted access to highly lethal means of suicide • Strong connections to family and community support • Increased skills in problem solving, conflict resolution and handling problems in a non-violent way

If you notice any of these signs or other changes in a peer or loved one:

1. Reach out to them and ask how they are doing. Plan a conversation with them when you have plenty of time and privacy.
2. Share with them the behaviors and changes they have displayed that have concerned you.
3. Allow the person to share his or her concerns and thoughts and offer to help them find and connect with the appropriate resources.
4. Directly ask if the person is thinking about suicide. Asking about suicide does not increase a person's risk for suicide, to the contrary it can be a relief that they can share these thoughts with someone else.
5. Offer hope when they need it most. Your offer of unconditional support and encouragement can be crucial to a suicidal person.
6. Let the person know that help is available, and reassure them that their feelings are temporary and that you value his or her presence in your life.
7. If you feel the person is an immediate danger to themselves or someone else call [Campus Security](#) or dial 911.

Mental Health Resources

CCAC Counseling Department

CCAC Counseling Department offers counseling services to ensure students are well-informed and well-guided as they make decisions about academics, careers and more. CCAC has services for personal counseling, transfer counseling and career counseling.

Private Practice Outpatient Psychotherapists

A list of local clinicians that offer outpatient psychotherapy services to college age individuals is available by contacting the [Counseling Department](#).

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National and Local Suicide Prevention Hotlines:

- [Allegheny County – Prevent Suicide PA](#)
- [Crisis Text Line](#)
- [National Hope Network \(1-800-Suicide\)](#)
- [resolve Crisis Network](#)
- [Veterans Suicide Prevention](#)

Additional Mental Health Agencies and Resources available in Allegheny and surrounding counties:

- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)
- [Peer Supported Advocacy Network \(PSAN\) Warmline](#)
- [Pittsburgh Mercy](#)
- [PA Care Partnership](#)
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)
- [Westmoreland County Mental Health](#)
- [SAVE: Suicide Awareness Voices of Education](#)
- [STAR Center Services for Teens at Risk](#)
- [Staunton Clinic](#)
- [SuicideIsPreventable.org](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)
- [Turtle Creek Valley MH/ MR, Inc.](#)
- [ULifeline](#)
- [UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital \(formerly WPIC\)](#)
- [Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program](#)

Last updated: December 2019

CCAC Outreach Plans

The Counseling Department staff continually engages in training to become more effective at recognizing and addressing suicidal students. For more information regarding upcoming training and events contact the Campus [Counseling Department](#).

Post-intervention Plan

The CCAC Deans of Students maintain a protocol that identifies the steps staff will take in the event of any campus emergency, including a suicide attempt or threat. This plan includes a process for communicating with students, staff, and parents in the event of such an emergency. In addition, counseling and support will be made available to all students affected by such an event. For more information about this plan contact the [CCAC Dean of Students](#).

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